

## An evolved role for commercial security professionals in British Columbia | June 2023



Over the last few years, there has been a notable surge in criminal activities occurring at the street level, leading to growing concerns among residents, law enforcement agencies, and local authorities in communities in BC. Key factors contributing to this increase include the sale and use of illicit drugs, homelessness and social vulnerability, economic challenges, and limited law enforcement and first responder resources.

The implications of this surge in street-level crime in Greater Vancouver have led to residents, visitors and business owners having significant safety concerns. There has been a rise in reported incidents of violence, theft, and harassment, leading to heightened fear among residents and visitors which has left people feeling unsafe in public spaces, affecting their quality of life and overall well-being. Other implications include strained social services and a negative economic impact on specific geographic areas where social problems and issues are most pronounced.

Solutions to these challenges include deploying enhanced law enforcement and security services in impacted areas, including integrated and enhanced units specifically designed to provide enhanced support to socially vulnerable persons experiencing homelessness, mental health, and other challenges. Further development of collaborative partnerships between law enforcement, security agencies, community organizations and local businesses to develop proactive strategies focused on prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation would greatly benefit the community.

Strengthening support services should also be a priority, including further investment into mental health, addiction treatment services and affordable housing. Public awareness campaigns to educate residents about crime prevention and reporting procedures would also help to reduce risk and make our communities safer.



Deploying well-trained personnel and technology from professional security companies is an important component of an appropriate response. When set up correctly, these companies can provide programs that would reduce risk and decrease the strain on law enforcement and social services, allowing the opportunity to focus on core services.



The rise in street-level crime in various communities in BC poses significant challenges for the cities and their residents. Addressing the root causes, increasing law enforcement, including private security resources (personnel and technology), and strengthening social support systems are crucial steps toward mitigating this issue. By implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach, municipalities and businesses in BC can work towards creating safer communities, improving the quality of life for their residents, and restoring public trust in safety, security, and well-being.

**GardaWorld is a global leader in providing integrated physical security, security systems and risk management solutions.**

Learn more at: [www.garda.com/security-services-bc](http://www.garda.com/security-services-bc).

**GARDA**WORLD